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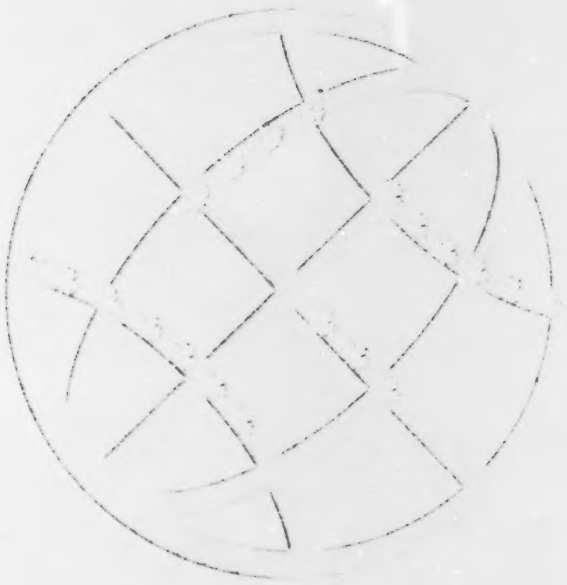
Policy Options

Phase One Report
Strategies for Implementation of a Human Rights Monitoring Network in Guatemala



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Phase One Report

Strategies for Implementation

of a

Human Rights Monitoring Network

in

Guatemala

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Human Rights Monitoring Network in Guatemala

Concept

To assist the democratic development in Guatemala by promoting and entrenching human rights through the creation of a monitoring network linking human rights groups, the country's first human rights centre, NGOs and government institutions. This network would also be linked to international bodies both to receive and disseminate information.

A second, but not secondary, element would be to assist local NGOs in developing public relations campaigns, particularly on radio, to further promote democratic development and a respect for human rights.

Human Rights Environment

Guatemala is undergoing a fundamental change; after more than three decades there is now the hope of lasting peace. The army is to be cut by a third. The Guatemalan National Revolutionary Unit (URNG) is to hand in its weapons. But the peace process is fragile and there is still a real concern about continued human rights violations. The view was often expressed to us in the course of our research that violence will continue to be endemic unless Guatemala moves swiftly toward a becoming a truly democratic society and receives international assistance to help with this transition.

With former soldiers and former members of the URNG being reintegrated into civil society, human rights organisations within and outside Guatemala are looking to neighbouring El Salvador as an object lesson. It is not a promising example. There is ostensibly peace in El Salvador but the violence continues because while people do not have jobs, many still have guns. What's more, in Guatemala the civil war has gone on for so long there is a fear that it has become almost institutionalized.

According to Suzanne Rumsey, of the Inter Church Committee on Human Rights in Latin America (ICHRLA), the lead Canadian NGO in Guatemala, "People doing human rights work still have good reason to be cautious about what they are doing. As the military is downsized and the rebels disarmed there are going to be a lot of people with no job skills, except how to use a gun. There is a concern that there will be a spiral of civil violence, from organised gangs and from individuals."

Human rights groups are also concerned about the future in light of the Amnesty Law, passed in December. Under it, both military personnel and URNG members will receive amnesty for common crimes -- such as sedition, damage, threats and fires -- committed

during the war. A loose coalition of human rights groups, The Alliance Against Impunity, has been opposing it. They are concerned that it will create loopholes which will allow past violators of human rights, particularily those involved in disappearances and killings, to go without trial.

Underlying this concern is an essential distrust of the judicial system. On the ground, the army has often effectively been an alternative to a corrupt police force. Many of the J.P.s have little legal training. The distrust of the judiciary stems from the fact that it was often a tool of the government establishment. Individuals and NGOs hold it accountable for past abuses. It is, according to ICHRLA, "discredited". There is a commitment from the government to reform the judiciary and money will be committed to that goal. But this inevitably will take a long time.

The culture of distrust also seeps into the human rights community: there is a fundamental lack of trust, a sense of territorialism and a fear about sharing information. For years human rights groups have had to be cautious and protective about their work because they were operating during a civil war in which violations, and retributions for reporting them, were commonplace. However, databases on human rights violations have been established; the two main organisations individually doing this work are The Archbishops Office on Human Rights (ODHA) and the International Centre for Human Rights (CIDH) which was working with the Science and Human Rights division of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, . Supporters of both groups, nationally and internationally, have accused the other of not sharing information. But from discussions with people in Guatemala, and with such organisations as the International Centre for Human Rights and Democratic Development, it is our conclusion that the ODHA has the best track record in collection and collation of human rights information.

Most of the multifarious human rights groups are well organised within Guatemala City, but do not have a great outreach or organisational structure beyond the city. They often work in just one locality or with just one group of people; they do not have an established network to gather and disseminate human rights information nationally. ICHRLA describes the structure of Guatemalan Human Rights groups outside the capital as "insipid". Research has shown that the only body which has an effective countrywide reach is ODHA, through Roman Catholic diocesan offices.

In Guatemala there is also a sense of isolation for human rights groups, that they do not know what is happening in the international community, that they are cut off from the latest developments. The converse of this is that they are concerned that the international community is not able to easily obtain information about what is happening on the human rights front in Guatemala.

There is a hope in the country that the mistrust between human rights groups should start breaking down, as the peace takes hold. There is also an expressed desire that information

gathered in the outlying regions be easily obtainable by groups within Guatemala City and by international human rights organisations in the rest of the world. It is on this foundation of an increasing willingness to be open and to work together rather than individually that the Human Rights Monitoring Network would be established.

Communications Environment

Guatemala is a developing country in which many of the outlying regions do not have telephones, where electrical supply is variable and where the main medium for mass communication is radio.
This being said, the telephone links within Guatemala City and between the capital and the other main towns are relatively reliable. There are also government hearings to establish a nationwide cell-phone network, which could mean by the end of the year even the most remote areas would be able to have a telecommunications link.

As far as high-tech communication is concerned, most of the cities have local internet servers, which allow access to the internet at the cost of a local phone call. There are also e-mail links in every urban centre, also accessible at the cost of a local call.

Some human rights organisations have computers and are technologically ready to use them extensively for the work of monitoring, networking and communication. According to Ambassador Daniel Livermore, one of the best prepared of these groups, in terms of tehcnological sophistication, is the Centre for Legal Action on Hurman Rights (CALDH).

For computers, the problems with the power supply can be lessened, although not overcome, by providing voltage regulators. These come with battery back-ups to allow information to be saved before the computer switches off.

A poor power supply, as well as a poor country, means that television is not the mass-medium it is in North America. In Guatemala, radio is the vehicle for popular communication. There are commercial stations in the major cities, listened to largely by the urban poor. Across the country the main providers are community radio stations, whose reach is determined by their wattage. These are run primarily by church groups and by NGOs and their audience is the rural poor. There are plans among some human rights groups to try to use radio, through community radio stations, to communicate the message of democracy and of the development of a civil society in an easily understandable manner.

The main means of transport in the country is bus. These vehicles are often in poor repair and in need of a paint job. We propose that some of these buses be given a new paint job, but with graphic art advertising that promotes democratic values. However, there are no large, or national, bus companies; one person may own no more than one, two or three

buses. This may create logistical problems in implementing the public relations campaign on a nationwide basis.

Goals

The primary goal is to establish a viable communications network which will link human rights groups in seven Guatemalan cities with each other, and with a central hub. This will allow the easy transferal of information between regions which is essential to developing trust between the various organisations and government institutions. It will also provide a link between Guatemala and the international community; allowing human right organisations within Guatemala to find out the latest international initiatives, and international organisations to have ease of access to developments in Guatemala. An essential part of this primary goal will be to assist in establishing Guatemala's first Human Rights Centre; this would be the only such centre for Central America outside traditionally democratic Costa Rica.
The secondary goal is to assist, technically and creatively, in developing and impelementing a public relations campaign to promote the development of a democratic and civil society.

Implementation

Human Rights Monitoring System

The Human Rights Monitoring Network would link seven cities in the west of Guatemala with Guatemala City; it may also include one city in the east. The population of the focus area is primarily indigenous and has seen the greatest proportion of human rights violations. The east of the country is mainly populated by people of Spanish descent and did not see as many abuses during the war.

The most flexible and appropriate system to link people and organisations in Guatemala is through an e-mail network; groups in the seven (or eight) locations can simply send e-mail to each other to provide updates on what is happening in their region and how it is being handled. They would also send these updates to a central hub, based in Guatemala City.

The hub would have an internet hook-up, as well as e-mail access. One person at the hub would be dedicated to collating the information received from throughout the country and putting it together into a weekly bulletin that would provide a national view. The bulletin would also include pertinent human rights information gathered internationally through the Internet. It would then be sent, as e-mail, back to all the groups which have provided the information, as well as being posted on the Internet as a Web Page, and therefore accessible to the international community.

E-mail:

As a working system e-mail is cheap: the software is available as "shareware" hence free. The running cost is the cost of a local telephone calls. It also requires minimal training to enable people to use it. And some parts of the process, such as establishing a mailing list of recipients, can be automated.

An e-mail network at the grassroots level also allows for the content to be screened and edited for security prior to transmission if necessary. Security is obviously a concern when dealing with such sensitive issues as human rights violations. Unfortunately no system is completely secure and if an agency with government backing chooses to monitor e-mail, it can. While there are encryption methods, agencies which have the will to break them, will succeed.

At the regional level, running a communications network through e-mail means that not everything is open to all eyes and ears. A functioning human rights database can continue to be established, with only pertinent and possibly edited information being transmitted by e-mail.

Internet:

The internet link allows human rights groups in Guatemala to have easy, cheap access to human rights information from around the world. The cost is again that of a local telephone up and, in Guatemala City, approximately US $90 for unlimited access through an internet provider.

To use the internet effectively, however, does require some training, to learn where to go, how to get there quickly, and how to download the information. It also requires training in how to establish, maintain and update a Web Page.

A Web Page is meant for public access and is not a tool for private, sensitive communication. It would however allow for interested international human rights organisations to have easy access to find out what is happening in Guatemala in fairly specific terms without jeopardizing anyone by transmitting full case studies.

For those organisations, particularly in Guatemala, which are not necessarily on the Internet but which want to participate in the project, the Web Page/bulletin can be sent out via e-mail. And the seven networked locations would also receive the Web Page/bulletin by

e-mail.

It would require one person be trained essentially as an editor -- to collate the information from the regions, and from international sources on the Internet, publish the Web Page, and send it back as a news bulletin to the seven centres.

Regional Centres:

The seven regional centres would be:

Coban (which covers two provinces)
Huehuetenango
Quetzaltenango
Quiche
Petin (which covers two provinces)
San Marcos
Solola (which covers two provinces)

These are regarded by Human Rights groups as priority areas. If the project expanded to the east the centre would be in Chiquimula or Zacapa.

The Hub:

The centre of the operation as far as taking information, editing it and redistributing it through e-mail and the Internet, would be in Guatemala City. CALDH *(see partners, below)* is trying to establish a Human Rights Centre in the capital. This centre was initially preceived as a hi-tech library, drawing on the resources of the internet as well as human rights books, periodicals and documentation. The Canadian Embassy in Guatemala is offering its support for this project, including an offer to provide some of the literature required. The head of CALDH, Frank LaRue, enthusiastically supports the human rights monitoring network. He has agreed to expand the original concept for the centre to incorporate the monitoring project and for it to become the hub and focus for the e-mail/Internet network.

Other Outlets:

Organisations working in the human rights field in Guatemala will be able to participate in the project, by joining into the E-mail network, and by receiving the weekly bulletins. A key one would be the Ombudsman of Human Rights. This body was established by President Alvaro Arzu to examine human rights violations, but at an arms length from the government.

Because of the widespread mistrust of the judiciary it would not be wise to incorporate government bodies directly into the system in its initial stages. Real concern has been expressed to us from a number of research sources that individuals, groups and NGOs would be less willing to participate in the network if they knew it was also linked to the

government. However as reforms of the judiciary proceed and trust increases, it eventually will become essential to involve them in the network.

Training:

There would be three main elements for training of participants in the Human Rights Monitoring Network:

1. For those people and groups who are not computer literate, there will be basic computer training: this would include how Windows operates, how to write, save and retrieve files, how to use the mouse etc.

2.A second stage for those who were computer illiterate, or as a first stage for those who are computer literate, will be how to use e-mail: this will include how to write the communications, how to send and receive mail, how to set up mailbox file systems, how to establish passwords and how to set up mailing lists.

3.The third stage of training will be primarily for those at the hub and will focus on the Internet. It will include how to use the Internet as a research tool; how to download information; how to write, maintain and update a Web Page; and how to transmit that information as e-mail.

Equipment:

The implementation of the network depends on access to computers and modems. Each location will need one computer, complete with monitor, mouse and keyboard with a modem installed. The Human Rights Centre in Guatemala City would benefit from having an 8x CD-Rom for its research functions.

A mid-range computer in both Canada and Guatemala is a Pentium 133, with at least 2.0Gb hard drive and 16 RAM; the minimal advisable modem for active Internet use is 28,800. In Guatemala, it is also advisable to buy a UPS voltage regulator, because of the variability of the electrical current.

Public Relations Campaign

Radio:

The second dimension of the work in Guatemala project is a public relations campaign to disseminate and promote the message of human rights and democratic development. One of the easiest means to reach a wide audience is radio.

CALDH is already working on a campaign, based on short radio programmes. There is an opportunity to participate and broaden this to include "democracy ads", short commercial like items, which as in advertising would have memorable jingles or catch phrases. Local popular music could also be used. These could be broadcast at little or no cost on community radio, and in paid slots on commercial radio. There would be strong input from a Canadian creative team in the writing of this material. Such a team would also be involved in developing the production of these 'commercials' in conjunction with NGO personnel in Guatemala who have considerable experience in radio. The actual production would be done in Guatemala City using local artists and actors.

Unlike other Peacebuilding initiatives using radio -- such as in Cambodia -- accent neutrality in the broadcasts is not an issue. However there is an necessity, just like in Northern Canada, to broadcast in the correct indigenous language for the region. Each item would have to be translated into the four main indigenous languages as well being written in, or translated to, Spanish.

Buses:

The other means of promoting various aspects of civil society which we explored is painting buses, covering them with messages promoting democratic values, in the style used by commercial advertisers on buses in some Canadian cities. However, implementing the project will not be easy because of the number of individual bus owners. Ambassador Livermore does see the value in a campaign which decorates buses with messages of peace, disarmament and democracy even if the whole vehicle is not covered. As we perceive it, each of these graphic messages could include a small Maple Leaf in the corner. Getting some of the bus owners on board for this dimension of the public relations campaign would have to be further explored in-country, during Phase II.

Partners

Guatemala:

The main problem for a project involving Human Rights in Guatemala is that there are a large number of Human Rights organisations and many of them specialise in one field, mistrust others groups, and have little structure outside Guatemala City.

The one organisation which has been mentioned consistently in our research by Canadian NGOs and observers in Guatemala and elsewhere as having widespread national respect for its human rights work is ODHA, the Archbishop's Human Rights Commission. It has perhaps the unique value of being nationwide in its reach. Ambassador Livermore said: "In terms of comprehensive coverage, the Archbishop's commission is the best."

Part of the reason for that is because it is directly involved in local communities through church diocesan offices. Suzanne Rumsey of ICHRLA said:"They work at a very local level and have infrastructure to work at that level. They also have a very strong reputation nationally."

Six of the seven regional centres we have earmarked -- all of which have expressed a strong desire to participate in this project -- are diocesan offices. In the seventh, Solola, we would likely be working through the Mayor's office. There is a new mayor in Solola who is very supportive of human rights organisations and who is also eager to participate in the project.

The only other organisation which does have a national reach is Minugua, the UN organisation in Guatemala. We have three concerns about integrating this project with Minugua. The first is that concentrating on a UN organization means this project would not realize the essential goals developing a vested interest shared human rights monitoring among Guatemalans, and in promoting computer literacy. Secondly, the mandate of Minugua is renewable and close association with them means their future dictates the future of this project. Thirdly, this project would lose its Canadian identity if it were fused with the UN operation.

Our recommendation is that the local NGO facilitator and partner in Guatemala be the Legal Action Centre for Human Rights, CALDH. This organisation, as discussed earlier, is setting up a Human Rights Centre, which, as the hub for our project, will show that the Human Rights Monitoring Network is not tied to the Catholic church. It is particularily important to avoid this allay this perception in order to encourage some human rights organizations, especially those with other religious affiliations, to participate.

In addition, CALDH is already starting to use new technology including E-mail. It is also, according to Ambassador Livermore and others, one of the few human rights groups which manages to work with other human rights groups and experts, managing to cross the boundaries from its own work, to the ODHA, to the Alliance Against Impunity. In a country where most human rights organisations are still distrustful and territorial it is vital to have a partner who is respected by, and can work with, a large number of organisations and groupings.

Canada:

We see a mix of commercial and NGO partners in this project. When a commercial partner is approached we will try to negotiate a reduced rate, because of the humanitarian nature of the work and the potential long term business benefits to the company, and to Canada.

E-mail:

the options are to:
1. work with an individual e-mail consultant, such as Sam Lanfranco, of York University and the IDRC's Bellanet, who has set up e-mail networks in other Central American countries

2. work through an organisation such as:
   - .York University's Distributive Knowledge Project, which is run by Mr Lanfranco;
   - the University of Ottawa's Human Rights and Education Centre;
3. work with a commercial e-mail consultant.

The advantage of options 1 and 2 are that these individuals and organisations have had experience of dealing with e-mail networks in the Central and Latin America.

We will also use an intern, sponsored by the Foreign Affairs International Trade Youth Intern Programme and managed by the Ottawa based organisation, Human Rights Internet. Human Rights Internet is offering a one week, initial training session for the interns. The intern chosen would initially work closely with the e-mail consultant and will stay when the project has been launched to help ensure that it runs smoothly.

Internet Training:

We will use a second intern, from the Foreign Affairs International Trade Youth Intern Programme, again supported by Human Rights Internet. This person would be responsible for training human rights workers how to use the internet and would stay when the project is running to ensure its smooth operation.

Internet Web Page Design:

While it would be possible to use an intern to do this as well, there are many Canadian commercial companies involved in Web Page design, who could be persuaded to participate. This would produce a very professional product, and have the Canadian stamp of expertise on it.

Among the possibilities are Seagate (who specialise in Web and E-mail security) Webwurx, and Webworks Worldwide. None of these companies have yet been approached about possible participation.

We would ask them to work with the intern on training the person appointed to look after the Web Page at the network hub, to enable them to update and disseminate the page.

Software:

Part of Phase II will be to establish software needs to allow the regions to integrate their present human rights monitoring, and database, in line with the hub. Canadian expertise would be vital at this stage, and it would be an opportunity to promote Canada as a leading software developer. However, until we know the specific needs of each region and the centre, which will be defined in Phase II, it is pointless to approach software manufacturers. The first company we would approach likely would be Corel.

Public Relations:

Radio: We will approach a number of Canadian advertising companies, to discuss the proposal. They would have to work closely with the Guatemalan partners to integrate the appropriate music, popular culture and language into each "democracy ad.."

Buses: Again we will approach Canadian advertising companies who have experience in painting the buses of Canadian cities. They too will have to work closely with partners in Guatemala to incorporate popular and recognisable images into the designs for the buses.

Hardware:

This project would need 8-10 computers. That would allow one for each regional office, one for the hub and would allow for quick expansion to the east of the country. The exact number would be determined during Phase II.

We have detailed the type of computer needed *(see Implementation 1: Hardware, above)*

Computer prices are similar in Canada and Guatemala. While there is no duty to be paid on the importation of equipment to Gutemala for human rights work, there is the cost of shipping and the loss of any warranty to be taken into account. Below is a price comparison: *(see attached for written quotes)*

Computadoras y Sistemas
Antigua, Guatemala
a clone
approx $2,265

Through the Canadian Embassy in
Guatemala City
Acer/Compaq
approx $2,210
(this was a verbal quote from the Embassy's computer officer)

Hallmark Computer Products	GE Capital	Government of Canada
Mississauga	Mississauga	Purchasing
$2649.00	$3017.00	$2889.00

The quote from the company in Antigua is for a low-end, clone computer with 8mb RAM, 1.28 gb hard drive with a voltage regulator. We did not get estimates for voltage regulators from the Canadian companies, both of whom deal in Digital computers. Voltage regulators are however a necessity in Guatemala. The Hallmark computer contains 0 .4gb more hard drive more than that purchased through the company in Antigua and has 8mb greater RAM. The GE Capital includes 1.3gb more hard drive than that offered in Antigua and also 8 mb more RAM. The computer available through the Canadian Embassy in Guatemala City is comparable to those bought in Canada; it is a brand name, with 2 gb hard drive, 8 mb Ram, and includes CD-Rom. The Digital computer available through the Canadian government in Ottawa is top of the range.

We would recommend purchasing the hardware in Guatemala because it is cheaper, particularly when shipping costs are added to the Canadian price. It will avoid potential customs problems, and will ensure comprehensive warranties are in effect.

Benefits for Guatemala

1. The Monitoring Network will provide an essential element in the struggle to protect and enhance Human Rights.
2. It will provide the opportunity for widespread citizen participation in the development of a civil society.
3. The network will become a national, and international, reference point on the state of Human Rights in Guatemala. Such transparency will further enhance the potential for the successful reconstruction of the country by increasing pressure on all parties to adhere to the terms of the peace accords.
4. It will introduce computers and elementary computer training at the grassroots level.
5. A simultaneous public relations campaign will contribute to mobilizing broad support for constructing a civil society.
6. The public relations campaign will provide a simple and popular way for people to learn about the proceses, structures and obligations of democratic process.
7. The public relations campaign will be an element in mobilizing grassroots commitment to protecting and enhancing Human Rights.

Benefits for Canada

1.The Human Rights Monitoring Network inocorporates two of the three pillars of Canadian Foreign Policy, nation building and the promotion of Canadian values. It also addresses a third pillar, the promotion of Canadian trade.
2. Implementation of the Network will enhance the perception, domestically and internationally, of Canada being a lead nation in the promotion and protection of human rights.
3. It is a high profile commitment demonstrating that Canada is honouring its UN obligations, beyond the despatch of Peacekeepers to the region. It will also demonstrate this fulfilling its on-going responsibilities as a member of the OAS.
4. It will be a showcase for Canada's expertise and creativity in the high-tech and commercial sectors.
5. It will provide an opportunity for Canadian businesses to demonstrate their ability to meet the needs of a non-commercial, developing client base; a potentially huge international marketplace.
6. This will provide a high profile gateway for the further development of trade in high tech communications and software in Central America.
7. It will be an opportunity for participants in the Foreign Affairs International Trade Youth Intern programme, offering valuable and rewarding work to two interns overseas.
8. The Human Rights Monitoring Network would be a model for implementation in other nation building endeavours.
9. It will further enhance Canada's image as a world leader in the promotion of democratic values.

Proposed Implementation Strategy for Phase II of the Human Rights Monitoring Network

Phase II Strategy

Phase II is intended to define precisely the needs for the Human Rights Monitoring Network. It will be an in-country assessment by the project leaders, accompanied for one week by a computer specialist and for two weeks by a digital communications expert.

The aim of Phase II is to refine the strategy, and specify the equipment and training needs for the network as well as developing the public relations campaigns.

Essential to the successful implementation of Phase III is the necessity of meeting with the main partners in each of the seven locations as well as in Guatemala City to establish their specific needs and their technical abilities.

It is the opportunity to determine the different levels of training needed, to ensure that the computer hardware is suitable and to establish whether there will need to be any software development for use by organisations in conjunction with the monitoring network.

Phase II is also a preliminary opportunity to try to get other NGOs involved in the network -- either through receiving the regular bulletins, or through their full participation by becoming a partner in the monitoring network.

Phase II also will be used to start the diplomatic negotiations with government agencies, such as the Ombudsman for Human Rights, regarding their involvement. As stated earlier, it is seen as advisable not to involve the judiciary at this stage. However it is an opportunity to assess at what stage branches of the government could be involved in the project.

This Phase is also vital for the public relations campaign. It is the opportunity to assess the level of development of the radio campaign which has already been initiated and to establish a Canadian involvement in enhancing it. It is the opportunity to assess the linguistic and cultural nuances which will make Canada's radio contribution distinctive. It will also be the main chance to see whether the concept of "democracy ads" will work on the country's buses, to talk to owners and persuade some to let their buses have a new paint job.

We would require approximately one week set up, to arrange meetings and itineraries, do necessary flight and hotel bookings etc. The only foreseeable delay is getting the necessary team together at the time we need to go.

We would report back within a week of return on the situation and the continuing viability of the project as well as details of negotiations with other participants. We would also be in a position to advise whether to continue with either or both public relations campaigns.

At this stage, when we have fully assessed the needs of our Guatemalan partners we will be in a position to provide specific details of Canadian partners who can play a role in Phase III of the project. And we will be able to provide a detailed Phase III budget

Phase II Team

The team for this Phase would be small, covering only the essential elements.

1. The project leaders. We would aim to send both project leaders. This will dramatically reduce the time required for the in-country assessments.

2. An e-mail/Internet expert. At this stage we would hope to find one person who can fill both roles, advising on the viability of e-mail and capabilities for Internet at each location.

3. A general computer expert. We will be looking for someone who can advise on both the computer environment, whether the hardware is suitable for the location, as well as someone who has a solid understanding of software, to establish the specific software needs.

4.Local hire: one or two interpreters hired on a day rate.

5. Local hire: a driver.

Phase II Budget

Project leaders		
Fees for 28 days, incl travel		$30,800.00
off base/Guatemala per diems based on Canadian government rate quoted as 148.75 Quetzels (approx $37.20) day		$ 1,190.40
Digital communications consultant & Computer consultant		
Fees	$11,000.00	
off base/Guatemala per diems based on Canadian government rate quoted as 148.75 Quetzels (approx $37.20) day		$ 708.40
Interpreters @ approximately $225/day each for 9 days		$ 4,050.00
Driver @ approximately $80/day for 10 days		$ 800.00
meals for local hire		$ 570.00
Return airfare: Toronto-Miami-Guatemala City Canadian/American, full fare economy @ $1,308.76/per person		$ 5,235.04
Hotels Clarion Suites, Guatemala City embassy rate $110.50+ 20% tax (no tax if booked thro embassy) + hotels in smaller centres @ approx $65 + tax		$ 4,500.00
Car rental compact (Hertz)/week @ 2 weeks		$ 660.00
Duty entertainment		$ 300.00
Out of country medical insurance (for four people)		$ 99.90
Telephone/fax expenses in Toronto		$ 500.00
TOTAL		$60,413.74

Summary

The Human Rights Monitoring Network is a simple way to use Canadian technology and expertise to link Human Rights workers across Guatemala.

It is based on a cross-country e-mail network which is linked to a central hub in Guatemala City, which, in turn, is connected to the Internet. Human rights workers will be able to update each other using simple e-mail technology. The central hub will use that information, and pertinent human rights material gathered on the internet, to produce a regular Web page report on the Human Rights situation in Guatemala. The report will be accessible to such international organisations as the International centre for Human Rights and Democratic Development, Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch and other bodies concerned about human rights violations. It will also be available throughout Guatemala for such organisations as the Ombudsman's Office on Human Rights, and individual human rights groups and will be sent back to the participating groups throughout the country.

The aim of this is to allow for ease of communication and transparency in human rights monitoring. At a later stage in Guatemala's transition to a civil society it is hoped to involve branches of the government in this network.

The hub in Guatemala City will be located in the country's first Human Rights Centre, the only such centre outside Costa Rica. Its development is already supported by the Canadian Embassy in Guatemala.

The Human Rights Monitoring Network will be a showcase for Canadian computer expertise, its developments in computer software and its advanced high tech communications abilities. It will also be an example of Canada's continued commitment to the protection of Human Rights and the development of a democratic society.

The main cost of the project is in the computer hardware; approximately 10 computers will be required. There is also the development of simple software, and communications consultancy fees. This plan will make use of the Foreign Affairs International Trade Youth Intern programme participants, in the establishment of the network and its continuing development.

It also provides an opportunity for Canada to be further involved in ensuring a lasting peace in Guatemala through public relation campaigns. One method being explored is the production of short "democracy ads" to be broadcast on radio -- the country's mass medium; these will be in four indigenous languages as well as Spanish and include catchy jingles and

local music. The second is placing "democracy ads" on the country's buses, with bright graphic representations of single issues which promote the peace accords.

Both public relations campaigns would again demonstrate Canada's commitment to democracy in Guatemala as well as showcasing Canada's commercial and creative talents.

No time frame has yet been established, but Guatemala is clearly trying quickly to establish the foundations for continued peace and democracy. These Canadian initiatives could be central to that process.